THE THIRD DAY.

20th February 1918.

The Assembly met at 12 noon on Wednesday, the 20th February 1918.

25. Measures to be adopted for the development of trade in the town of Quilon.

Mr. K. A. Krishna Pattar (Member, Trading Classes, Quilon) represented that the merchants were suffering much inconvenience and requested that the following measures be adopted :—

(*a*) The construction of godowns, like those in Alleppey, for storing articles of merchandise at the two existing Chowkeys at Quilon.

(*b*) The re-construction of the Tobacco Bankshall landing ghat at Quilon, which had been a *debris* for the past ten years.

(*c*) The construction of boat basins on either side of the Quilon canal, like those in Alleppey, with facilities for loading and unloading goods from the canal, and the widening of the road by the side of the canal. The work should be carried out for about a mile from the Kochupilamudu landing place to the Forest landing (Sanchayakadavu).

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

III. PROTECTION.

(I) Legislation.

26. Reform of the Legislative Council.

Mr. K. Parameswaran Pillai B. A. & B. L. (Member, Trivandrum Taluk) traced the origin of the Legislative Council and submitted that the amendment of the original Regulation by the passing of Regulation V of 1073 was a step in the backward direction. He complained that, during the last 4 or 5 years, there had been frequent exercise by Government of legislation by means of Royal Proclamations, although there was no necessity for it; for, as the Council was constituted at present, the Government could pass any laws in the usual way at any time and without the least difficulty. That method of treating the Legislative Council, which was a precious gift from His Highness the Maha Raja, was defeating its very intentions. He next dwelt at length on the expansion of the Legislative Councils and the Home Rule movement in British India and explained how the spirit of democracy had spread and evoked new hopes and aspirations in the people in the British Indian Provinces. He then referred to the proposals made for according Native States a place in the scheme of self-government for the Indian Empire. With a view to the progressive realisation of the reforms proposed by the Member, he made the following suggestions in regard to the Legislative Council:—

(*a*) Increase of the non-official element in the Legislative Council.

(*b*) Provision of an elected non-official majority in the Council.

(*c*) Statutory grant of the right of election of the non-official Members.

(*d*) The right to interpellate Government on administrative matters.

(*e*) The right to discuss and pass the annual Budget before adoption by Government.

(*f*) The right to pass Resolutions on questions of public importance.

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Mr. K. Narayana Pillai (Member, Nedumangad Taluk) said that he agreed with what Mr. Parameswaran Pillai had spoken and submitted that the request being a long-standing one, it might be granted without further delay.

Mr. Ousep Devasya (Member, Trading Classes, Changanacherry) also endorsed the representations of the two previous Members, but he requested adequate representation of the different communities in the Council before sanctioning the reforms advocated.

Dewan.—The year before the last, the different Members who had taken up the same subject were dealing with the same points in connection with the same subject. I then observed that, in order to make their representations more effective and to avoid waste of time, the Members who brought up the same subject would do well to consult one another previously and agree among themselves what particular points each of them would take up. To this it was said that they had no previous knowledge of the names of the Members and the subjects taken up by them and that, if the list of subjects was published in the Gazette beforehand, there would be no difficulty in adopting the course suggested. Accordingly, arrangements were made since last year for the publication of the list of subjects in the Government Gazette two weeks before the Assembly met. Last year, the suggestion was not adopted in practice. But this year, I am glad to see that the three gentlemen who have just spoken appear to have consulted one another about their representations as is evident from their speeches. This is good and will, if followed by the other Members, be of advantage both to them and to the Government.

The representations of the Member's will receive careful consideration.

27. Appointment of a Jenmi Member in the Legislative Council.

Mr. Trivikramar Vasudevar (Member, Jenmi, Padmanabhapuram Division) said that the Jenmis had been requesting for the nomination of one from their community as a Member of the Legislative Council at every session of the Assembly to safeguard their interests. The objection raised was that they did not know English, in which language the proceedings were conducted in the Council. The Member's answer was that, Malayalam being the language of the country, ignorance of the English tongue ought not to be a bar. If the Government insisted on their representative possessing as much knowledge of English as would enable him to follow the proceedings and take part in them, they should be permitted to return a Jenmi from outside the State having landed interests in Travancore or to nominate one from another community to represent them in the Council.

Mr. Narayanar Janardanar (Member, Jenmi, Trivandrum Division) submitted that he had nothing more to say on the subject.

Mr. Akkiraman Maheswaran Bhattathiri (Member, Jenmi, Quilon Division) supported the first speaker.

Mr. Narayanan Tuppan Namburi (Member, Jenmi, Kottayam Division) had nothing to add to what the other Members had spoken.

Dewan's reply.—Your request to appoint a non-English knowing Malayala Brahmin as a Member of the Legislative Council is not unreasonable by itself. Malayalam, as you say, is the language of the country and should be encouraged. I believe you are aware of the policy of Government in regard to the Vernaculars. The Government do realise the importance of the Vernaculars. In spite of all that, the proceedings of the Legislative Council have to be conducted in English. Your representative in the Council need not be an adept in the English language. If there is any one among you who has a working knowledge of English and is able to understand the proceedings and express himself in that language, Government are prepared to consider your request. Your suggestion to appoint one from another community to represent you would be like engaging a Vakil in a court of law and is not in keeping with the prestige of the Council. The alternative suggestion in regard to the appointment of a Jenmi who has landed interests in the State to the Legislative Council will be considered.

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